

KANSAS CITY VOICES



A FEW THOUGHTS
ON POLICE VIOLENCE
AND DONALD TRUMP

ANARCHISTS!!!



chiefforte @ChiefForte · 12h

.@kcpolice dealt w/bomb threat, heavy presence of known anarchists, outside agitators, protesters attempt to harm supporters & other issues



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On Saturday March 12, 2016 Donald Trump made an appearance in Kansas City, Missouri. Kansas City, like many US cities in this period is struggling with occasional white-supremacist groups attempting to organize publicly and has been subjected to violence at the hands of bigots. Just a short drive for the Westboro Baptist Church and home to several white-supremacist groups this is not surprising. This is a growing worldwide trend as the international economic collapse continues to send folks searching for the cause of their increasingly desperate financial situations. This combined with the blowback from common place US trade failures (NAFTA) and worldwide aggression (The US and other NATO allies have had a direct responsibility in ISIS gaining power as well as the Ukranian Neo-Nazi Coup) has given rise to the perfect climate for marginalized groups (Folks who have been *otherized* by white supremacist capitalist patriarchy) to become the scapegoat for the problems caused directly by the US government. Of course this is nothing new in the United States which has a completely unreconciled history of violence (The genocide of indigenous peoples, the slavery of Africans, the internment of Japanese, and so much more).

Fortunately Kansas City antifascists have been consistent in confronting these groups whenever they attempt to come out into the light and



Downtown Kansas City (2014)

recruit new members to their misplaced and opportunistic rhetoric of hate and violence.

When the Minutemen organized in 2008 they were met with confrontation. In 2013, 1,000 people showed up to confront the National-Socialist Movement. In 2014, less than a month before a

white-supremacist went to a Jewish community center near Kansas City and shot 3 people, holocaust denier David Irving held a private meeting hosted by the Plaza Hampton Inn which was infiltrated, documented, and disrupted by antifascists. In 2015, when Westboro Baptist Church

showed up in North Kansas City because they wanted to harass children who had chosen to elect a trans homecoming queen they were chased to their vehicles. In 2016, when Men's Rights Advocates attempted to organize



North Kansas City (2015)

to 'legalize rape' their event was canceled and worked as a catalyst to inspire a pro-feminist rally in Kansas City in its place. Kansas City remains a city that keeps the tragedies of the missing Ayotzinapa students in Mexico as well as the heartbreaking murder of Mike Brown across the state in Ferguson, Missouri fresh in our collective memory. So it is no



Kansas City (2016)

surprise that a public appearance of someone like Donald Trump, who has dedicated much of his political presence to being a beacon of violent white-supremacist rhetoric and action, would inspire a devoted counter-presence.

Activists infiltrated Trump's speaking event and began to disrupt his speech one at a time. This disruption managed to delay a portion of Trump's event.

Outside the venue protesters and counter protesters yelled at each other along both sides of the street. Even in

the Midwest Trump events have been met with a large variety of confrontation. At some point some of the protesters stepped off the sidewalk.



The response from KCPD was as predictable as it was familiar. KCPD has a long history of abusing horses by using them to attack unarmed civilians. Events in

recent history that come to mind are the attacking of activists at a Ferguson solidarity march in which they went as far as breaking a person's foot, and the annual summer harassment of black teens for daring to enter the Plaza shopping district. Along with the KCPD summer tradition of terrifying and hurting horses to attack humans

they have regularly attacked unarmed children using pepper spray, as they also did last year to a crowd of unarmed people after the St. Patrick's Day parade. KCPD, and more specifically Chief Forte, have a history of using social media to lie about events. They get violent with

folks then get on social media to spread lies. At Saturday's Trump rally KCPD decided to go with all three options; they put their horses into a stressful and dangerous situation in order to attack Kansas City residents, they pepper sprayed entire crowds of families



indiscriminately, and they took to social media to put their public relations spin on the situation. Chief Forte tweeted about the incident: "kcpolice dealt w/bomb threat, heavy presence of known anarchists, outside agitators, protesters attempt to harm supporters & other issues." Besides KCPD violently attacking non violent protesters multiple times in recent history they have also specifically singled out anarchists for snatch and grab arrests and anarchist prisoner Eric King is currently facing decades of his life in a cage for an alleged act of property destruction.

This seems as good of time as any to reflect on the role anarchists play in our city. Kansas City anarchists along with sympathizing radicals and occasional progressives have been a constant force for positive change locally. It was Kansas City Anarchists who ran a local bookstore. It is Kansas City anarchists who have handed out free food and clothing through several outreach projects weekly for the last several years. It is Kansas City anarchists who have written weekly to those the state of Missouri have

locked away from us in cages. It is Kansas City anarchists who have excelled in making Kansas City a better place to live through our best efforts in spite of police, the government they are implicit in, and the business interests they protect.

It is also necessary for us to break down the myth of the "Outside Agitator." Even Martin Luther King jr took this term to task, it is an old stand by for law enforcement. Even if such a critique were relevant, who could be more of a violent outsider than KCPD and racists like Donald Trump? KCPD killed more than 40 people in the last 10 years, shooting, assaulting, harassing, locking in cages, and ticketing countless others. Donald Trump has encouraged his supporters to attack people and they have.

Another thing KCPD has been known for is not giving



proper warning for the violence they are so thirsty to partake in. Look no further than the Ferguson solidarity march in which KCPD run into an unarmed protester repeatedly with a vehicle before stomping another protester on the head

and arresting many others without adequate warning. This leaves us quite skeptical to any claims they gave 'proper' warning at Saturday's Trump rally before attacking a mixed group of unarmed residents. How exactly do you justify pepper spraying people for standing on a city street anyway? No matter what kind of warning you give them..

It is with this context in mind and more that we present to you a collection of first hand accounts from KCPD's attack

at the KC stop of Donald Trumps touring circus of a campaign.

Kansas City Voices: A Few Thoughts on Police Violence and Donald Trump

I arrived at the Trump rally/protest outside of the Midland around 5pm. I had walked from the parking garage so I was on the sidewalk across the street, which was where the protesters were lined up. There was already a decent-sized diverse group of people gathered, holding signs and talking as I walked through the crowd taking pictures. I only brought my camera, no sign for or against any candidate, as most of the crowd had. The KCPD had the lane of traffic directly in front of the Midland blocked off, and they had formed a line along with a barricade facing the protesters. Making only one lane of traffic accessible. They kept their cameras on the protesters the entire time, and from what I witnessed, never once turned them toward the jeering people on the rally side.



The first couple hours went by with an occasional Trump supporter walking through the protesters' side of the street harassing people until they boo'ed him back to the other side. Some people made it over to the rally side and quietly held Anti Trump signs up for the protesters to see in solidarity. Things were pretty tame. At one point the protesters gained a positive momentum of chanting in

unison between everyone and came together. Some stepped off the curb and up to the line of police, chanting loud, hoping to be heard inside the Midland where Trump was speaking.

From what I filmed and what I witnessed standing on the curb of the sidewalk, there was absolutely no display of violence from the protesters. That's when a white mist went up in front of us and everyone around me was hit with something cold and wet and began choking and



turned to run. A young girl beside me fell and because people couldn't see from the pepper spray, she was being trampled. I yelled to a man beside me to help me get her up and we locked arms under her and got her moving. After I found a place by a window and was bent over choking I saw a woman pass by carrying maybe a 2 year old, holding his jacket across his face.

After that people began yelling at KCPD for the unwarranted pepper spray on top of protesting against Trump. The cops directly in front of us laughed and one said, we "*Could have made our point from the sidewalk.*" I told him everyone on the sidewalk around me got sprayed and that he could have made his point without dousing people in chemicals. To which he replied, "*It wasn't me, I didn't spray you,*" shrugged his shoulders and walked away. Protesters were angry, but they stayed respectful of the guidelines despite the injustice they had just been dealt.

A few yards down from where I was standing a group

locked arms with their backs to the police and slowly began stepping off the curb, protecting each other with their own bodies in case police began using force. Two mounted police officers on horses began violently kicking their heels into the ribs of the horses to get them to run



into the protesters. At one point we heard bloodcurdling screams over and over coming from the mass of people being assaulted. That small group were the only ones that stepped off the curb. But that was the second time everyone along the protesters side, in the street and on the sidewalk got doused in pepper spray. More so than the first time. People, young and old, abled and disabled, who were standing next to me on the curb began collapsing, grabbing their eyes, holding onto each other choking.

There was one guy who was running around with milk trying the best he could to ease the chemicals burning on everyone's faces. I never got his name but he helped so many people. Police chief Darryl Forte later commented his officers were *"Being surrounded and opposing sides were trying to come together,"* to justify the excessive amount of force police used. That is a bold exaggeration on his part. He also referenced a police horse being assaulted. I witnessed two officers repeatedly kicking confused animals to make them run into people. It is one thing to protect and serve the diverse people of your city, it is another to outright lie to cover your tracks.

Here is a list of SOME of the lies that Forte and KCPD are perpetuating about last night:



1) "Police were dealing with a bomb threat reported inside the Midland Theater as the rally started."

"@kcpolice dealt w/bomb threat, heavy presence of

known anarchists, outside agitators, protesters attempt to harm supporters & other issues" -- @ChiefForte

If this were the case, Trump would have been evacuated immediately. This is a blatant attempt to discredit the protest, and legitimize the use of chemical warfare on a peaceful protest. Also, no attempt at any point was made to physically assault or harm Trumpers. I can't say the same for their fragile emotional state. There quite a few moments of justifiable rage at the transphobic, racist, and misogynist comments made by Trumpers when I would certainly not have condemned the epic beatdown they would've deserved.

2) "At about the same time, I heard officers on the radio saying they were starting to get surrounded by the people outside. The Trump protesters were on both sides of Main Street. They started encroaching onto the street."

We were only on one side of the street, the eastern side, with the exception of a group of about 10 who infiltrated the western side which was FILLED with at least 150

Trumpers.

3) "The officers called in our Mounted Patrol for back up to break the two groups apart and get them out of the street. In the course of that, a police horse was assaulted."

"Horse might have kicked as a result of being punched. Glad no one was injured." -- @ChiefForte

Being just behind the front line, I was able to witness first hand what really happened. They brought them in, two of them, to push a small group (~20 strong) back onto the sidewalk. When they held the line, refusing to



budge, they started literally RAMMING the horses into the line in an attempt to TRAMPLE the protesters (an extremely dangerous tactic). In self defense, some of them raised their HANDS UP (DON'T SHOOT) to DEFEND THEMSELVES. Of course, this is the same system that will leap to call anything assault when it's against them but will defend shooting unarmed teens all day.

4) "More officers were called in to help maintain safety and order. Some of the people gathered outside began to put on personal protective equipment (gas masks)."

Nobody put on gas masks. Not a single person in the entire crowd. Some of them put bandanas or shirt over their mouth/nose to try to protect from additional pepper

spray after the cops showed their willingness the first round. Again, people have a right to defend themselves and this is arguably the most passive way they could've done it.

5) "Several of them tried to rush the front doors of the theater, blocking Main Street in the process."

There was no attempt to rush the front doors of the theater, on either of the street, and you can see this on even the video they posted on the Chief's blog. They merely took



the street in a very common protest tactic. It was an act of defiance against the police state, not a direct threat to the theater. Of course, they know this and want to incite fear.

6) "They warned that pepper spray would be used if those gathered didn't follow the commands."

Being on the front lines, I can tell you that there was never a warning about pepper spray in the first round. Quite literally, I watched as one officer (who can be clearly seen in one of the videos) take out a cannister, walk up to the crowd, shake it a few times, then spray it long-range across the entire crowd. This was followed by more officers behind him. Not a single warning was given, and IF it was it was not loud enough to be heard. Imagine someone whispering a warning to you from 20 yards in

the middle of a concert. In all of the videos recorded from last night, not one of them captured a single warning.

7) ".@kcpolice deploying resources to move masked protesters out of street. Protesters are throwing objects. Foggers w/be used. Still under control" --
@ChiefForte

A popular lie used by police as an excuse to deploy force, I can say that maybe one or two empty plastic bottles were thrown but no more than that.

Donald Trump had a rally in St. Louis March 11th 2016, the locals came out to oppose him. There was a long line of Trump supporters outside that showed up hours before his scheduled appearance. The line stretched out over several blocks as +3000 came to the rally at the Peabody Opera House. Before Trump arrived maybe 30 or 40 protestors we scattered on opposite ends of the lines. Protestors demonstrated well within their rights, to the agitation of the Trump supporters. A man in an anonymous mask stood on a US flag. An elderly male Trump supporter got out of line 3 times to attack the protesters, and each time the police would gently escort him to safety. However police did not show the same kind of care to the protestors, as more than 30 people would be arrested at the rally that day, none of them would be supporters. Many times protestors would be arrested right after having been sucker punched by a Trump supporter. Once inside, black people were even thrown out of the building, just for being black. In St. Louis, Trump supporters could not be black. By the time Trump spoke protestors were well over a hundred and they made their voices heard. The following day Donald Trump appeared

in Kansas City, again Trump support was in the thousands and supporters and protestors alike gathered hours before Trump spoke. Comparatively most of Kansas City's Trump protestors seemed to be Bernie supporters while most of St Louis seemed indifferent to all presidential candidates. Nevertheless radicals were still in masses that gathered in KC on March 12th. Trump fans seemed just as belligerent as they were the day before but no fist fights broke out like they did in St. Louis.

Several Trump Supporters at different times would gather around protestors screaming hateful things and threatening violence. Protestors inside one by one



managed to disrupt Donald's speech for 45 minutes.

Outside police pepper sprayed nonviolent crowds without warning. A police horse that was being used to threaten a trampling was almost hit by the pepper spray. Inside the theatre Trump had anyone thrown out for even so much as holding a sign for Bernie. While the police were still able to oppress in both cities, Donald Trump did not have an easy time that weekend thanks to the tireless efforts of the people that came out to oppose nationalism.

**If you have a first hand account from this event we
would love to hear from you:
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